

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman John W. Olver (D-1st District) announced that the U.S. House of Representatives has approved a funding bill that includes \$1,000,000 for the Housatonic River Museum's construction of a certified LEED Platinum building.

Olver secured the funding in the FY10 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which the House passed on July 17, 2009. Olver is on the Appropriations Committee and worked to secure the funding. The Senate must still approve its appropriations bill and then both chambers will have to approve a reconciled bill before it goes to the president's desk to be signed into law.

funding announced by the House of Representatives will be used to include energy conserving technologies in the construction of the museum. Keeping with its mission to celebrate the river and its watershed, the Housatonic River Museum will be designed to achieve two goals of environmental sustainability: a zero-carbon footprint and net-zero energy levels. The building will conserve energy use with as much as a 50% reduction in consumption and use solar panels to provide renewable energy that will be fed into a local grid when there are surpluses. The building's design will be certified *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Platinum* (LEED Platinum) by the U.S. Green Building Council.

“The River Museum will provide an educational experience to its visitors in more ways than one. Not only will the Museum highlight the River’s history, ecology and conservation, but the building will also demonstrate some very exciting green energy technologies,” Congressman John Olver said. “We can all be proud that the first zero-energy commercial building on the East Coast, and only the eighth in the nation, will be right in our backyard.”

The Housatonic River Museum will provide an educational experience to tourists and valley residents while simultaneously serving as an example of an ecologically sensitive building. The museum's exhibits will reveal the history, ecology, and conservation of the river. The Housatonic River is part of the Western Massachusetts heritage area and has played an important role in the region's history. The museum will highlight the rich cultural history and explore the future of the region. Local conservationists and environmentalists have raised more than 90% of the funding for this museum privately.

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